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1–5 March 1999
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
Demographic, social and migration statistics

Siena Group for Social Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Statistical Commission the report of the Siena Group for Social Statistics (secretariat: Italy), which is contained in the annex. The report is transmitted to the Commission in accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its twenty-ninth session,[1] and a request of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination at its nineteenth session (see E/CN.3/1999/20, para. 13 (c)).

The Statistical Commission is invited to discuss whether the mandate of the group is focused and whether its objectives are clear and attainable. The Commission may also wish to comment on the proposals for future work.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 4* (E/1997/24), chap. I.

* E/CN.3/1999/1.

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Annex

Report by the Siena Group for Social Statistics

Purpose

To promote and coordinate international cooperation in the areas of social statistics by focusing on social indicators, social accounting, concepts and classifications, and an analysis of the linkages and frameworks for integrating social, economic and demographic data for the purposes of policy formulation and analysis.

Year organized

1993.

Participants

Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Economic Commission for Europe, Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), United Nations Statistics Division.

Meetings and other events

Siena, 17–20 October 1993.

Stockholm, 6 and 7 June 1994.

Oslo, 8 and 9 June 1995.

Paris, 6 and 7 June 1996.

Neuchatel, Switzerland, June 1997.

Sydney, December 1998.

5–11 July 1998, First International Summer School on Social Statistics, on the theme "Inequality and equity", organized by the Training Institute for European Statisticians and the Siena Group in cooperation with the University of Siena Group and sponsored by the European Commission (Eurostat). This was the first of three courses/themes to be arranged over three consecutive years. The second theme (1999) will be: "Participation, discrimination and exclusion", approached mainly from the meso level. The third theme (2000) will be "Cohesion, integration and policy analysis", approached mainly from the macro level. The first theme may be repeated in 1999 and the second in 2000.

Topics considered

Social statistics, national accounts and economic analysis; social reporting and social accounting; monitoring social exclusion in education and labour markets; intergenerational relations and social mobility; on the way to a multicultural society; families at the end of the twentieth century; and inequality and equity.

Products

A Statistical Portrait of Youth Exclusion (1997)

Volume of proceedings after each meeting

"Monitoring multicultural societies", a Siena Group report, Jacqueline Buehlmann, Paul Roethlisberger and Beatm Schmid (Swiss Federal Statistical Office), eds., Berne, 1998.

Planned activities

The meeting scheduled for 7 to 9 December on the theme "Families at the end of the twentieth century", which is being held at Sydney, will have four main topics: "Family formation and fertility"; "Economic aspects of families"; "Family classifications and other statistical issues"; and "The caring role of families".

This is a critical time for the development of social statistics at the international level. For this reason, the third day of the Sydney meeting will be dedicated to discussing "Future directions for social statistics and the role of the Siena Group", and in that context, creating a multinational consortium of researchers and national statistical agencies engaged in collaborative work on the main themes of the meeting. It is proposed to collate a brief one- or two-page statement on the state of family statistics within each country participating in the meeting, including the concepts, definitions and classifications used, the sources of data and some broad trends. This information will be circulated at the meeting to provide a context for discussion. Its objective is to take stock of what the Group has achieved to date and what can be achieved through future meetings. The discussion will consider areas of mutual interest, such as the harmonization of concepts and classifications, and social accounting, where further joint work might be of benefit. The tentative structure for the third day of the meeting is:

1. The Siena Group after five years — origins and intentions, progress and achievements (Paolo Garonna, Italian Institute for Statistics (ISTAT)).

2. Harmonization of classifications (Pieter Everaers, Eurostat).

3. Further education and training in social statistics — 1998 Siena Summer School (Rudolph Teekens, Training Institute for European Statisticians).

4. Integrating social and economic statistics (Barbara Dunlop, Australian Bureau of Statistics).

5. Activities and the development of collaborative relationships with other complementary expert groups: Canberra Group, Delhi Group, International Association for Research in Income and Wealth.

6. Panel discussion: "Where to from here?" (Paolo Garonna, ISTAT; Michel Glaude, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques; Heinz Gillomen, Swiss Federal Statistical Office).

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For information on the fifth meeting, on the theme "On the way to a multicultural society", to be held at Neuchatel in June 1997, contact:

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To obtain a copy of the forthcoming volume entitled "Monitoring multicultural societies", a Siena Group report, contact:

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